

Opening Statement of the Honorable John Sullivan
Subcommittee on Energy and Power
Hearing on "The American Energy Initiative: A Focus on Alternative
Fuels and Vehicles, Both the Challenges and the Opportunities"
July 10, 2012
(As Prepared for Delivery)

This is the twenty-third day of our hearing on the American Energy Initiative. This morning we will be discussing alternative fuels and vehicles, both the challenges and the opportunities.

Gasoline and diesel fuel currently dominate the transportation sector, and that is not likely to change any time soon. For that reason, we need to take steps to ensure plentiful and affordable supplies of petroleum and the fuels that are made from it. That means expanding domestic oil production, approving the Keystone XL pipeline to allow more Canadian oil to come into the country, and reviewing the red tape that raises the cost of refining crude into gasoline and diesel fuel. That is why I strongly supported measures like the Domestic Energy and Jobs Act, and why I will continue to fight for a commonsense, pro-consumer, pro-jobs, and pro-energy policy.

But in addition, we need to look at options other than petroleum derived fuels, and indeed we are doing so. We are well into implementation of the Renewable Fuel Standard created in the 2005 energy bill and expanded in the 2007 bill. The RFS has achieved some successes such as increased ethanol production. However, some also see shortcomings with the RFS that may need to be addressed.

Even beyond ethanol and other biofuels, there are many other alternative fuels and vehicles, including natural gas, electricity, coal-to-liquids, methanol, and flex-fuel vehicles. Each offers its own unique mix of advantages as well as disadvantages, and all offer the benefits of diversification.

I look forward to learning more about these options, and exploring the question of what role, if any, the federal government should play in shaping the fuels and vehicles markets of the future.

###